

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Page 1, after the title at line 3, please insert the following heading and paragraph:

--PRIORITY CLAIM

This is a U.S. national stage of application No. PCT/EP03/001888, filed on February 25, 2003. Priority is claimed on that application and on the following application:

Country: Germany, Application No.: 102 09 309.1, Filed: March 2, 2002.--

Page 1, prior to line 4, please insert the following heading and paragraph:

--BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION--.

Page 1, beginning at line 8, please amend the paragraph as follows:

Fuel cells, including, for example, molten carbonate fuel cells, have the problem that when normal operation is interrupted, e.g., during an emergency shutdown or standby operation, when no fuel gas is being supplied to the anodes, the anodes must be quickly inerted (i.e. rendered inert) to prevent them from being damaged or destroyed by oxidation. This is especially true for high-temperature fuel cells with an operating temperature of 200°C or more. In previously known systems, it is customary to use a flushing or protective gas, which is typically nitrogen. Due to the amounts of gas that are required, it is necessary to provide a nitrogen tank specifically for this purpose, which results in additional space requirement and expense. Furthermore, the permissible shutdown time is limited by the stored supply of flushing gas.

Page 2, after line 16, please insert the following heading:

--SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION--.

Page 2, beginning at line 17, please amend the paragraph as follows:

The objective of the invention is to ~~specify~~ provide a method for inerting the anodes of

fuel cells in which a standby gas does not have to be specially supplied and in which there is little or no additional equipment expense. A further objective of the invention is to create a fuel cell system in which inerting of the anodes is possible without the need to store a special supply of standby gas and without additional equipment expense.

Page 2, please delete the paragraph beginning at line 22.

Page 3, please delete the paragraph beginning at line 1.

Page 3, please delete the paragraph beginning at line 3.

Page 3, please delete the paragraph beginning at line 5.

Page 5, after line 6, please insert the following heading:
--BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS--.

Page 5, after line 9, please insert the following heading:
--DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION--.

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